



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SEPHARDI JEWRY

A study tour of Jewish medieval Spain

29 May–13 June, 2018



Shalom is pleased to announce that it will be hosting a very special educational tour of Jewish medieval Spain from **29 May-13 June, 2018**. This tour will be led by Paul Forgasz. Paul is a lecturer in the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation at Monash University where he teaches about Jewish–Christian-Muslim relations in the Middle Ages. For the past several years, Paul has led Jewish study tours to various European destinations on behalf of Shalom and the Jewish Museum of Australia

What is special about this tour?

As with any tour, you will visit various cities, towns and sites of both Jewish and general historical interest and your local guide will be on hand to explain the features of these sites. However, under Paul's expert guidance, you will actively engage and interact with these sites through the reading and analysis of texts, group discussions, role plays and simulations. In other words, you will step back into history, into the world of the Jews of medieval Spain. As you visit particular sites you will re-live significant historical moments; step into the shoes of the great medieval Spanish Jewish poets, statesmen, scientists, philosophers and mystics; and enter the vast cultural and intellectual storehouse of this once thriving centre of Jewish civilisation. The itinerary has been designed in a way which will enable you to experience the story of the Jews of Spain as an unfolding chronological narrative.

Tour operator

The local travel agent is FBI Travel and at the Spanish end, all arrangements will be handled by IBEROservice.

Spanish land package

The price per person (twin share) is 5250€uros. The cost of a **single supplement** is 900€uros. Note that AUD payments will be tied to the EURO exchange rate. In order for this tour to proceed **on the basis of the above price**, we will need firm commitments from a **minimum of 15 people**. You are therefore advised **not** to make any flight bookings until you are advised that the tour is definitely proceeding.

The following are included in the land package:

- ❖ Centrally located four star hotel accommodation (15 nights)
- ❖ Daily buffet-style breakfasts
- ❖ 3 evening meals
- ❖ 6 lunches
- ❖ Workshop on Sephardi music at the Casa de Sefarad, Cordoba
- ❖ Flamenco show at the Casa de la Memoria Al Andalus, Seville
- ❖ Entrance fees to sites as per itinerary
- ❖ Experienced English speaking local guides
- ❖ Study materials
- ❖ Deluxe motor coach travel as per itinerary
- ❖ Tips for guides and bus drivers
- ❖ High speed train (tourist class) from Seville-Madrid and Madrid-Barcelona
- ❖ Hotel-to-hotel delivery of luggage when travelling on inter-city trains

Not included in the price:

- ❖ Airfare and airport taxes
- ❖ Travel insurance
- ❖ Hotel transfers to and from the airport
- ❖ Tips for hotel staff (at your own discretion)
- ❖ Hotel extras such as mini bar, room service
- ❖ Meals other than breakfast and those listed above

If you need any help with pre and post tour arrangements, booking of flights arrangements, or organising travel insurance, Tamara Menachem of FBI Travel, would be more than happy to assist. In fact, he has been able to locate some attractive flight options to Malaga both in terms of price and connection times, and can be contacted on 8573 09i5 or via email: TamaraM@fbitravel.com.au

What happens next?

You will need to complete the online registration form which can be accessed by clicking the link below. Alternatively, you can cut and paste the URL into the search window of your browser.

<https://asp.tramada.com.au/tms/fbitravel/client/client-online-registration.htm?clientDebtorToken=YThkMGQ2YmMtMDQzNC00Y2YyLWlyMzMtNjFhOTEzYmFiMjFj&clientDebtorId=680>

Upon registration, payment of a \$1500 deposit **per person** will also be required. Payment of the single supplement will be added to the final instalment. For each instalment you will be invoiced for the equivalent Australian dollar amount based on the exchange rate at the time of invoicing. FBI Travel reserves the right to slightly vary the equivalent Australian dollar amount, as a buffer for any increase in the rate from point of invoice to paying the Spanish supplier. However, appropriate account will be taken of this when calculating the Australian dollar amount of the final instalment.

Deposits will be held by FBI Travel until the first instalment is transferred to IBEROservice in Spain, after which time deposits and subsequent payments will not be refunded if you wish to cancel your registration. You are therefore strongly advised to take out adequate and appropriate travel insurance to cover any unforeseen circumstances which might result in you not being able to participate in the tour.

Places on the tour are strictly limited and will be filled in order of receipt of registration forms. Successful applicants will be notified once the tour group is filled. You should not make any flight arrangements until you are advised that the tour is definitely proceeding, at which point you are strongly advised to take out travel insurance. Deposits will, of course, be returned if the tour does not go ahead.

Once you have registered and paid your deposit, please advise Paul Forgasz by email: paul.forgasz@monash.edu

Refer to the following page for a detailed tour itinerary (subject to revision)

DETAILED TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 – Tuesday 29 May

Make your own way to the Hotel Guadalquivir in Cordoba. After settling in, we will gather for a late orientation session, followed by a welcome dinner in the hotel. Overnight in the Hotel Guadalquivir, which overlooks the Guadalquivir River and is only minutes away from the heart of the old city.

DAY 2 – Wednesday 30 May

This morning we will visit Medinat Azahara, the magnificent city-palace (now largely an archaeological ruin) built by Abd ar-Rahman III for his favourite concubine, az-Zahra (the Flower). In 929, he established Cordoba as an independent caliphate which was an island of interfaith tolerance during the 10th and 11th centuries, and this is where our story begins. During this morning's study session, we will discuss the question of why this period came to be known as the "golden age" of Spanish Jewry and learn about the extraordinary career of Hasdai ibn Shaprut, the Jewish physician and diplomat who served in the court of Abd ar-Rahman III at Medinat Azahara. Overnight in the Hotel Guadalquivir.

DAY 3 – Thursday 31 May

In this morning's study session, we will meet some of the great Hebrew poets of medieval Spain and learn about the intricacies of the *majlis*, a stylised wine party held in luxurious gardens, where poets of the day would recite their work. Our tour of **Cordoba**, the cradle of Spanish Jewry's "Golden Age", will begin with a visit to the splendid Mezquita or Grand Mosque, which set the pattern for Islamic art in Spain and also served as a source of inspiration and imitation for synagogue architecture. We will explore the narrow medieval streets of the old Jewish quarter, including the synagogue which bears the name of Judaism's greatest philosopher, Maimonides. His impressive statue stands just down the street, in front of the house where he is said to have been born. We will visit the Casa Sefarad, a beautifully designed museum dedicated to the life of Sephardi Jews, where we will also be treated to an exclusive workshop on Sephardi music and culture. Overnight in Cordoba at the Hotel Guadalquivir.

DAY 4 – Friday 1 June

We depart very early today for **Granada**, where the Muslim phase of our unfolding narrative comes to an end. The highlight of our visit will be the spectacular Alhambra, the final bastion of Moorish presence in Spain. The Christians reconquered most of Spain by 1250, but Granada remained the last great vestige of Muslim presence. Moreover, it was known in Moorish times as *Granat-al-Yahud* (Granada of the Jews). In fact, it was here that one of the most important Jews of medieval Spain, Samuel ibn Nagrela, rose to great prominence under Muslim rule. However, shortly after the city's conquest by the Christians in 1492, the Edict of Expulsion was signed in the Ambassadors Hall, which we will visit as part of our tour of the Alhambra. In the afternoon, we will walk through the Albaycin district, old quarter of Granada, including the colorful Moorish bazaar. Our walking tour will end up at the statue of Yehudah ibn Tibbon who translated into Hebrew works written in Arabic by some of the great Jewish scholars of the time. Overnight in Granada at the Hotel Carmen.

DAY 5 – Saturday 2 June

In this morning's study session, we will examine the amazing career of Samuel ibn Naghrella, who became the vizier of Granada. We will also debate the question of just how "golden" this age was for the Jews of Spain. The afternoon will be at your leisure in **Granada**. Overnight at the Hotel Carmen

DAY 6 – Sunday 3 June

This morning's study session will focus on the contrasting pathways to God as reflected in the thought of Maimonides and Judah ha-Levi, two giants of the Sephardic intellectual tradition. Indeed, this was an issue that divided not only the Jews of Spain, but also those living in other parts of the Jewish medieval world. Following lunch in the hotel, we will depart by coach for **Seville**. In the evening we will be treated to an outstanding Flamenco performance. Overnight in the Hotel Becquer.

DAY 7 – Monday 4 June

We will begin the day with a study session which will introduce you to the Reconquista, the Christian phase of our narrative. Then, under the expert guidance of Moises Hassan, a local Jewish tour guide, we will take a walking tour of the Santa Cruz, the old Jewish quarter of **Seville**. Along the way we will stop at *Calle Susona* (Street of Susona) and hear about the tragic story of “Beautiful Susanna”, the daughter of Don Diego Suson, a marrano. In our walk through the Jewish quarter, we will also see the Church of Santa Maria La Blanca which was built on the site of a synagogue. We will visit the enormous cathedral of Seville with its imposing Moorish tower which houses the key to the Jewish quarter that the Jews of Seville handed to King Fernando III as a sign of their submission. Overnight in Seville at the Hotel Becquer.

DAY 8 – Tuesday 5 June

We depart this morning by high speed train for **Madrid**. On arrival, we will take a guided tour of the Prado Museum which is counted amongst the leading art galleries in the world. In preparation for tomorrow’s excursion to Avila, a late afternoon study session will focus on the development in Spain of the Kabbala and Jewish mysticism. Overnight in Madrid at the Hotel de las Letras.

DAY 9 – Wednesday 6 June

A very full day of sightseeing, cultural activity and study in Avila and Segovia.

Segovia is famous for its ancient Roman aqueduct. Walking through the old Jewish quarter, we will visit the Church of Corpus Christi which was the Sinagoga Mayor up until the early fifteenth century. Today it is the only one of medieval Segovia’s five synagogues that remains standing. We will also visit one of the most important buildings of the Jewish quarter, the palace-house of Abraham Seneor. He was the court appointed chief rabbi of Spanish Jewry, administered the taxes of the kingdom of Castille and served as treasurer-general of a military organisation that was normally closed to Jews. However, he and his family embraced Christianity in the wake of the 1492 edict of Jewish expulsion. Today, his house contains a beautifully designed Jewish education centre and museum, which we will also visit. Over a picnic lunch we will examine the controversial life of Don Abraham Seneor.

Avila is best known for its impressive medieval walls, the oldest and best preserved in Spain. It was a major centre of medieval Christian and Jewish mysticism and also the later home of Moses de Leon, author of the Zohar, the foundational classic work of the Kabbala. At the Moses de Leon Gardens we will take step back into de Leon’s world. We will visit the Mysticism Interpretation Centre which is dedicated to the history of Christian, Muslim and Jewish mysticism. Here, a diverse group of artists have lent their inspiration and mastery to the creation of a unique and timeless space in which the visitor can experience the mystical journey through the interplay of architecture, painting, sculpture, design, music, light, darkness, sounds, materials, words and poetry.

Overnight in Madrid at the Hotel de las Letras.

DAY 10 – Thursday 7 June

Today’s excursion takes us to **Toledo**. As early as the 13th Century, the School of Translators of Toledo had brought classical and Arabic culture to the western world and Toledo was the capital offering the most favourable convivial atmosphere for the blending of the Arabic, Jewish and Christian cultures. When you see Toledo, you will understand why its Jewish residents called it the “Jerusalem of the West.” Ten of Toledo’s synagogues are reported to have been destroyed in the infamous anti-Jewish riots of 1391, but two survived. We will visit the 14th century Transito Synagogue and its Sephardic Museum which displays hundreds of years of Jewish culture in Spain, as well as the “Great Synagogue” which was consecrated in the fifteenth century as the Church of Santa Maria la Blanca.

Overnight in Madrid at Hotel de las Letras.

DAY 11 – Friday 8 June

We depart by fast train for Barcelona. After checking into the hotel and partaking of a light lunch, we will embark on a half day panoramic tour of **Barcelona** which will include a visit to Montjuic, the “Jews’ Mountain.” In the evening we will come together for a festive Shabbat meal, Overnight at the Hotel Barcelona Center.

DAY 12 – Saturday 9 June

In the morning we will come together for a study session in which we will examine how Jews, under Christian rule in Spain, experienced the best of times and the worst of times. The rest of the day will be spent at your leisure in **Barcelona**. Overnight at the Hotel Barcelona Center.

DAY 13 – Sunday 10 June

This morning’s tour will explore the amazing work of Gaudi, a native son of Barcelona and one of the world’s architectural geniuses. It will include a visit to his most famous creation, the truly amazing church of *La Sagrada Familia*. The rest of the day will be at your leisure. In the early evening we will have a study session focusing on the story of Spain’s Jewish *conversos*. Overnight at the Hotel Barcelona Center.

DAY 14 – Monday 11 June

A full day excursion to **Girona**, which was the birthplace and home of Nachmanides or RaMBaN, the famous biblical commentator, halachic scholar and mystic. We will explore the old Jewish quarter of Girona. We will also spend some time in the Bonastruc ca Porta Centre which bears RaMBaN’s Spanish name and houses a wonderful Jewish museum. We will then continue to **Besalu**, a town which still retains the charm of medieval times. In the old Jewish quarter, we will see a 12th century mikveh (Jewish ritual bath) and the remains of a 13th century synagogue.

Overnight at the Hotel Barcelona Center.

DAY 15 – Tuesday 12 June

This morning we will meet with Dominique Tomasov, a Jewish heritage expert, under whose expert guidance we will explore the fascinating medieval Jewish quarter of Barcelona. We will visit the Placa del Rei where the Inquisition in Barcelona held its first auto da fe. The adjacent Palau Reial Major was the scene in 1263 of the theological debate between Nachmanides, the great Jewish rabbi and thinker, and Pablo Christiani, a Jewish apostate who converted to Christianity. We will also visit the synagogue where the famous medieval Jewish scholar, the RaSHBa (Rabbi Shlomo ben Adret), served as rabbi for more than fifty years. He was also the author of numerous responsa (Jewish legal opinions).

In the heart of the old Jewish quarter, we will focus in our final study session on one of the most tragic events of Jewish history – the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. We will consider the dilemmas which Spanish Jews confronted in having to decide how to react to the 1492 edict of expulsion – whether to leave or to convert to Christianity.

Our tour will come to an end with a farewell lunch, overlooking the port of Barcelona. The rest of the day and evening will be free at your leisure

Overnight in the Hotel Barcelona Center.

DAY 16 – Wednesday 13 June

Hotel checkout and departure.

SEE FOLLOWING PAGE FOR LINKS TO HOTEL INFORMATION

Hotel information

Cordoba – Hotel Guadalquivir

<https://www.nh-hotels.com/hotel/nh-cordoba-guadalquivir>

Granada – Hotel Carmen

<http://www.hotelcarmen.com/en/>

Madrid – Hotel de las Letras

<http://www.hoteldelasletras.com/en/>

Seville – Hotel Becquer

<http://www.hotelbecquer.com/en/>

Barcelona – Hotel Barcelona Center

<https://www.hotelescenter.es/en/hotel-barcelona-center/>

The above hotels may be subject to revision depending on room availability at the time of making reservations. However, if bookings will need to be made for alternative hotels, they will be of a similar standard to the above.

**REFER TO THE FOLLOWING PAGE FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS, ACCEPTANCE OF WHICH YOU
WILL BE REQUIRED TO INDICATE UPON REGISTRATION**

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Touring can involve a considerable amount of walking and stair climbing in places visited and it is important that tour participants have a level of physical fitness that allows them to take part in such activities without the need of assistance from others.
2. IBEROservice (Spain) is responsible for making arrangements for the tour services offered here, including transportation, sightseeing, meals and hotel accommodation. FBI Travel acts only as agents for passengers in the making of arrangements with carriers, hoteliers, and others for the tour. Accordingly FBI Travel cannot accept liability for any act of omission, whether negligent or otherwise of those carriers, hoteliers or others providing services in connection with the tour over whom we have no direct or exclusive control.
3. Shalom and FBI Travel do not accept responsibility for any damage to property or person(s) incurred during the course of this tour.
4. Shalom and FBI Travel are not liable and accept no responsibility for any direct or indirect loss, financial loss, consequential loss, loss of enjoyment, pain & suffering, damage, injury, accident, delay or irregularity occasioned to the individual, whether caused by act, omission, negligence or otherwise while participating in this tour.
5. Shalom and FBI Travel strongly recommend that individuals insure themselves against medical expenses and loss of personal possessions, and any other foreseeable loss or expense.
6. It is the responsibility of tour participants to obtain suitable advice from a recognised health authority regarding any vaccinations or applicable health precautions.
7. Tour participants are responsible for ensuring that they have a valid passports, visa and permits which meet the immigration and governmental requirements of the country of travel. Passports must be valid for at least six months upon return into Australia from overseas travel..
8. Before travelling overseas Shalom and FBI Travel recommend you to register your travel and contact details online or at the local Australian embassy, high commission or consulate once you arrive so you can be contacted in an emergency.
9. Upon registration, payment of a \$1500 deposit **per person** will also be required. One further and final instalment will need to be paid approximately 60 days prior to commencement of the tour. Payment of the single supplement will be added to the second instalment. For each instalment you will be invoiced for the equivalent Australian dollar amount based on the exchange rate at the time of invoicing. FBI Travel reserves the right to slightly vary the equivalent Australian dollar amount, as a buffer for any increase in the rate from point of invoice to paying the Spanish supplier.
10. Deposits will be held by FBI Travel until the first instalment is transferred to IBEROservice in Spain, after which time deposits and subsequent payments will not be refunded if you wish to cancel your registration. Deposits held by FBI Travel will be returned if the tour does not go ahead due to lack of numbers
11. Places on the tour are strictly limited and will be filled in order of receipt of registration forms. Successful applicants will be notified once the tour group is filled. Prospective tour participants should not make any flight arrangements until advised that the tour is definitely proceeding.